

REMARKS

Applicants have received and reviewed an Office Action dated March 9, 2004. By way of response, Applicants have cancelled claims 1-19 and 24-25 without prejudice. No new matter is presented. Claims 20-23 and 26-30 are pending. Applicants submit that the pending claims are supported by the specification.

Only the allowed claims remain pending.

For the reasons given below, Applicants submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Petition for Extension of Time

It is noted that a three-month petition for extension of time is necessary to provide for the timeliness of the response. A request for such an extension is made extending the time for response from June 9, 2004 to September 9, 2004.

Restriction Requirement

Applicants acknowledge that the restriction requirement has been made final. Applicants acknowledge and appreciate that the species election requirement has been withdrawn.

Specification/Sequence Listing

Applicants have previously submitted a sequence listing. For the Examiner's convenience, a copy of the following documents filed on March 28, 2002 are enclosed: Transmittal Sheet; Notice to File Corrected Application Papers - Part 2; Response to Notice to File Corrected Application Papers and Certificate Regarding Sequence Listing; Communication Pursuant to 37 CFR § 1.821(e); and sequence listing. The specification has been amended to insert the sequences identification numbers.

Rejection of Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 24 and 35 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Nonetheless, solely to expedite prosecution of the present application, Applicants have cancelled claims 1, 2, 24 and 25 without prejudice. This renders these rejections moot.

Accordingly, it is believed that the amended claims fully comply with § 112, and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

Summary

Each of pending claims 20-23 and 26-30 have been allowed. Applicants look forward to receipt of a Notice of Allowance and Issue Fee Due. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below, if the Examiner believes that doing so will expedite prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: Aug 26, 2004

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